



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/031,207	07/02/2002	Stig Bakke	HAMSO20.001APC	2457

20995 7590 10/20/2003

KNOBBE MARTENS OLSON & BEAR LLP
2040 MAIN STREET
FOURTEENTH FLOOR
IRVINE, CA 92614

EXAMINER

HEWITT, JAMES M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3679

DATE MAILED: 10/20/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/031,207

Applicant(s)

BAKKE, STIG

Examiner

James M Hewitt

Art Unit

3679

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 August 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 4 and 10 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3 and 5-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 11 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☒ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

Claims 2 and 11 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In claim 2 line 7, the comma should be deleted.

In claim 2 lines 9-13, the phrase "wherein tapers in wall thickness provide all the conical surfaces such that when the conical surfaces connect a total wall thickness is essentially uniform" should be expounded to better convey the conical relationship between the inner sleeve and the outer adapter/connector sleeve, and the outer adapter/connector/sleeve and the socket-like connecting element.

In claim 11 lines 8-15, a distinction should be made between the internally threaded bore of the coupling member that engages the inner sleeve and the free threaded end of the coupling member that engages the connecting member.

In claim 11 line 10, "longitudinal" should be replaced with "longitudinally".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 3 and 5-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Itoya (US 3,972,547) in view of Meripol (US 3,248,135).

With respect to claim 1 and with particular reference to the embodiment shown in Figures 12-14, Itoya discloses a connector for connecting the end portion of a pipe (36), wherein the connector is provided with at least one connecting device (10) for threadingly engaging and attaching equipment/tools, the connector comprising parts that can be screwed together and have aligned bores for the accommodation of the pipe end portion, which is to be secured in the connector in the screwed-together condition of the parts, the connector further comprising a radially inner transversally shrinkable (or compressible) adapter sleeve (50), which is to bear in a connected position at its inner circumferential surface in a clamping manner against the outer jacket surface of the pipe end portion, characterized in that the adapter sleeve includes an externally threaded jacket surface which cooperates with a surrounding outer adapter and connector sleeve (14) with an internal threaded circumferential surface, the outer adapter and connector sleeve being formed to cooperate with a threaded jacket portion of a socket-like connecting element (threaded end on right side of component 10 in Figure 14) formed on an end piece of the connecting device (10). Itoya fails to teach that the external threaded surface of the inner adapter sleeve and the communicating internal threaded surface of outer adapter and connector sleeve are conical. Meripol teaches a coupling comprising an outer adapter and connector sleeve (20) having a conical internal surface which cooperates with a mating conical external surface of an inner adapter sleeve (28). In view of Meripol's teaching, it would have been obvious to

Art Unit: 3679

one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the internal surface of Itoya's outer sleeve (14) with a conical surface and the external surface of his inner sleeve (50) with a mating conical surface in order to more tightly secure and better retain the pipe (36).

With respect to claim 3, wherein at the end located the furthest from the end piece with the socket-like connecting element, the outer adapter and connector sleeve is formed with an inward annular flange defining a sleeve core section of a diameter generally corresponding to the outer diameter of the pipe. Refer to Figure 14.

With respect to claim 5, wherein the end piece is adapted to receive downhole equipment at the end (threaded end on left side of component 10 in Figure 14) substantially opposite from the socket-like connecting element.

The threads permit attachment of downhole equipment and therefore make the end piece adapted to receive downhole equipment.

With respect to claim 6, Itoya does not disclose whether the external threads (52) of the inner sleeve are left-handed or right-handed. Nevertheless, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ left-handed threads depending on the thread type of the sleeve (14).

With respect to claim 7, Itoya fails to teach that his inner sleeve includes threads on the inner surface thereof that bite into the surface of the pipe to resist displacement of the inner sleeve relative to the pipe. Meripol's inner sleeve includes teeth/threads (29) on the inner surface thereof which engage the outer surface of pipe (18) to resist displacement of the sleeve and to prevent withdrawal of the pipe. In view of Meripol's

Art Unit: 3679

teaching it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the inner surface of Itoya's inner sleeve with threads in order to resist displacement of the inner sleeve relative to the pipe and to prevent withdrawal of the pipe.

With respect to claim 8, Meripol does not disclose whether the teeth/threads (29) are right-handed. Nevertheless, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ right-handed threads depending on the constraints dictated by the application or on the preference of the user.

With respect to claim 9, wherein the external threads of the inner adapter sleeve transfers external torque on the connector so as to further tighten around the pipe so as to resist circumferential displacement of the inner adapter sleeve relative to the pipe.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 2 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and if the above noted objections (see ***Claim Objections***) are overcome.

Claims 4 and 10 are allowed.

Claim 11 is objected to but would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the above noted objections (see ***Claim Objections***).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 8/8/03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant asserts "...a modification in view of *Meripol* to provide a threaded conical external surface to the packing member destroys the sealing purpose disclosed in *Itoya* since threads along the external surface of the packing member provide a helical path for fluid flow that remains regardless of the tightness of the threaded connection." The Examiner disagrees. To make clear the rejection, in *Itoya*, the external threaded surface of packing (50) is straight and the internal threaded surface of locking member (14) that mates with the external threaded surface of the packing is also straight. In *Meripol*, the external surface of packing (28) is conical and the internal surface of locking member (20) that mates with the external surface of packing (28) is also conical. A distal end of *Meripol*'s locking member (20) is straight threaded onto pipe (10). In view of *Meripol*'s teaching, the external surface of *Itoya*'s packing and that internal surface of *Itoya*'s locking member that threadingly mates with the packing were modified to be matingly conical or tapered. The distal end of *Itoya*'s collar that threadingly engages member (10) would be straight, as would the threaded portion of member (10). This would not result in any leakage due to the conicity (the helical threaded engagement) of the external surface of the packing and the mating internal surface of the locking member. Whether the threaded engagement is helical/conical or straight, the sealing ability of the joint would be the same. The straight threaded engagement of the distal end of locking member (14) and member (10) would permit the same tightening with the packing and locking member being

Art Unit: 3679

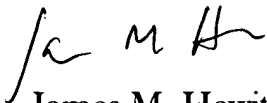
helically/conically threaded as it would with the packing and locking member being straight threaded.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James M Hewitt whose telephone number is 703-305-0552. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 930am-600pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynne Browne can be reached on 703-308-1159. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1113.



James M. Hewitt
Patent Examiner
Technology Center 3600